

who have turned to the Patroness in times of distress to receive her comfort. This religious symbol has survived fires, earthquakes, and typhoons and inspires the faithful who seek her intercession for protection from famine, earthquakes, typhoons and tsunamis.

During the occupation of Guam in World War II, believers turned to Santa Marian Kamalen for help and some risked their own safety by saving the statue from confiscation and destruction by the occupiers. Today, Santa Marian Kamalen continues to inspire the Catholic faithful on Guam and throughout the Marianas. She holds an exalted position above the altar in the Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral-Basilica in Hagåtña, Guam. As the Patroness of Guam and the Mariana Islands, her feast day is celebrated each year on December 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, with a procession of thousands of the faithful in Hagåtña.

On Sunday, September 17, 2006, a replica of the Santa Marian Kamalen will be enshrined at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC. Hundreds of followers from Guam, the Northern Marianas, and throughout the nation have converged in a pilgrimage to honor Our Lady of Camarin.

The enshrinement of Santa Marian Kamalen is recognition by the Church of the deep faith of the Chamorro people and a distinct honor for the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Agaña. The ceremony will celebrate the love of the devotees of the Patroness of the Mariana Islands.

The enshrinement of Our Lady of Camarin would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of many people, most notably the Most Reverend Anthony Sablan Apuron, OFM Cap., DD, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Agaña, the clergy and religious on Guam and the Mariana Islands, officers of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas in the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Agaña, and all of the faithful. Biba Santa Marian Kamalen!

#### RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF YOUTHBUILD TO THE NATION

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2006*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5837, a bill to amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to provide for a YouthBuild program and to recognize the many achievements and accomplishments attributed to YOUTHBUILD USA.

The YouthBuild program started in my Congressional District of East Harlem in 1978 as a response to the failed public school system, the lack of workforce development programs available to young adults and the growing number of youth who were being driven into the criminal justice system. YouthBuild's mission is to provide a pathway to successful productive careers. YouthBuild started in the interstices between these three systems as a community-based comprehensive program designed with and for youth. It became simultaneously an alternative school, a job and career training program, a point of re-entry for adjudicated youth, a way to serve one's com-

munity by building the highly valued commodity of affordable housing, and a way to gain leadership skills to improve the community in the long run and to become somebody who could make a difference.

This combination has been highly attractive to the disconnected youth, and has created a pathway to a productive future for tens of thousands of young adults across the country.

YouthBuild spread from East Harlem throughout New York City, and from there around the country. It became a federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program in 1992, and with HUD's help has spread to 226 of America's poorest urban and rural communities. It has been incubated as a federal program in HUD—still outside of the existing public education, workforce development, and criminal justice systems. At HUD, the emphasis has been on broad community development.

YouthBuild has shown itself to be highly attractive to communities seeking a solution for the fact that 32 percent of America's youth are dropping out of school, a hundred thousand are aging out of foster care each year and need a supportive transition, and tens of thousands are returning to their neighborhoods from incarceration needing a guiding hand.

Now YouthBuild is being moved as a response to its success. It is consistent with the priorities of the Department of Labor to engage the most disadvantaged youth in education and job training in high-demand careers through a cost effective community-based solution. While it is consistent with HUD's general community development goals, it is consistent with the Department of Labor's central priorities for young adults.

YouthBuild programs are also working well as re-entry programs under a special grant with the Department of Labor and with various state governments. They are working as AmeriCorps programs especially designed for low-income youth in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service. They are also working with local public school systems and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation—40 YouthBuild programs have become diploma-granting public charter or alternative schools, expanding the reach of limited federal funds by attracting additional local public education funds and deepening YouthBuild's role as an alternative school. Since it has become simultaneously a school, a job-training program, a re-entry program, and a national service program, it is working now on the creative edge of all these systems.

Local YouthBuild programs are led by entrepreneurial and committed professionals rooted in local communities. They are knit together by a national non-profit organization, YouthBuild USA, that works in partnership with the federal government to hold local programs to high standards, to train them in best practices, and to recognize innovative promising practices. This public/private partnership has also proven itself to be a good delivery system which has been responsible for the effective implementation of a creative program design.

At a time when America is seeking solutions to the disconnection from school and work of over 5 million 16- to 24-year-olds, 2.4 million of whom are poor, at a time when we are realizing that some of our existing systems are not working for this sub-set of young adults, it is a good moment to highlight YouthBuild as a solution, and position it in the Department of

Labor for its next stage as a visible and viable pathway to success for tens of thousands of young Americans.

#### azerbaijan—time to free the political prisoners

**HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2006*

Mrs. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice goes to New York for the opening of the 61st United Nations General Assembly she is expected to meet with Foreign Minister Elmar Mammad-yarov of Azerbaijan. His country is becoming an important geo-strategic player in the Caspian region and Central Asia. It has worked closely with the United States on the critical oil pipeline from the Caspian to the Mediterranean and other issues.

There are some important obstacles to realizing the full potential of our strategic relationship with Azerbaijan. Of particular concern is the deteriorating human rights situation and the growing number of political prisoners in that country's jails.

During her confirmation hearings before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations earlier this year, Ambassador Anne Derse stressed the importance the United States attaches to freedom, democracy and human rights as high priorities in our relationship with Azerbaijan. The Bush administration's emphasis on the critical importance for nurturing democracy, not only in bringing freedom to people but in helping make this a safer world at a time of growing threat from Islamofascism, is of particular concern in Central Asia. Azerbaijan is a secular Muslim state, thus making the development of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law ever more critical in such an unstable region of the world.

Azerbaijan is also an important American interest in energy and security cooperation. As our economic and political cooperation grow, our relations with Azerbaijan become more critical. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has spoken of his commitment to democracy but, unfortunately, the gap between promise and performance is widening, not shrinking.

I am particularly concerned about the need for an independent judiciary, commitment to the rule of law and a transparent justice system. An alarming number of political prisoners are held in Azeri jails, most notably former Minister of Economic Development Farhad Aliyev and his brother Rafiq Aliyev (The brothers are no relation to President Aliyev). Farad Aliyev was arrested on trumped-up political charges of planning a coup, and to that was later added a charge of murdering the editor of Monitor magazine, Elmar Huseynov. The actual confessed murderer, Haji Mammadov, a former official of the Interior Ministry's Criminal Investigation Department, reportedly accused Farhad Aliyev of ordering the killing. Independent media reports demonstrate that the accusation is not taken seriously and believed to have been pushed on the killer, perhaps in a deal for a lighter sentence, as part of the government's desire to strengthen its weak case against Aliyev and eliminate a potential rival for the president.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Secretary of State Rice to take up this matter at the United Nations